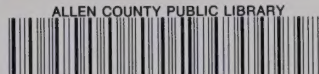


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St. Charles centennial,  
June 16-19, 1960

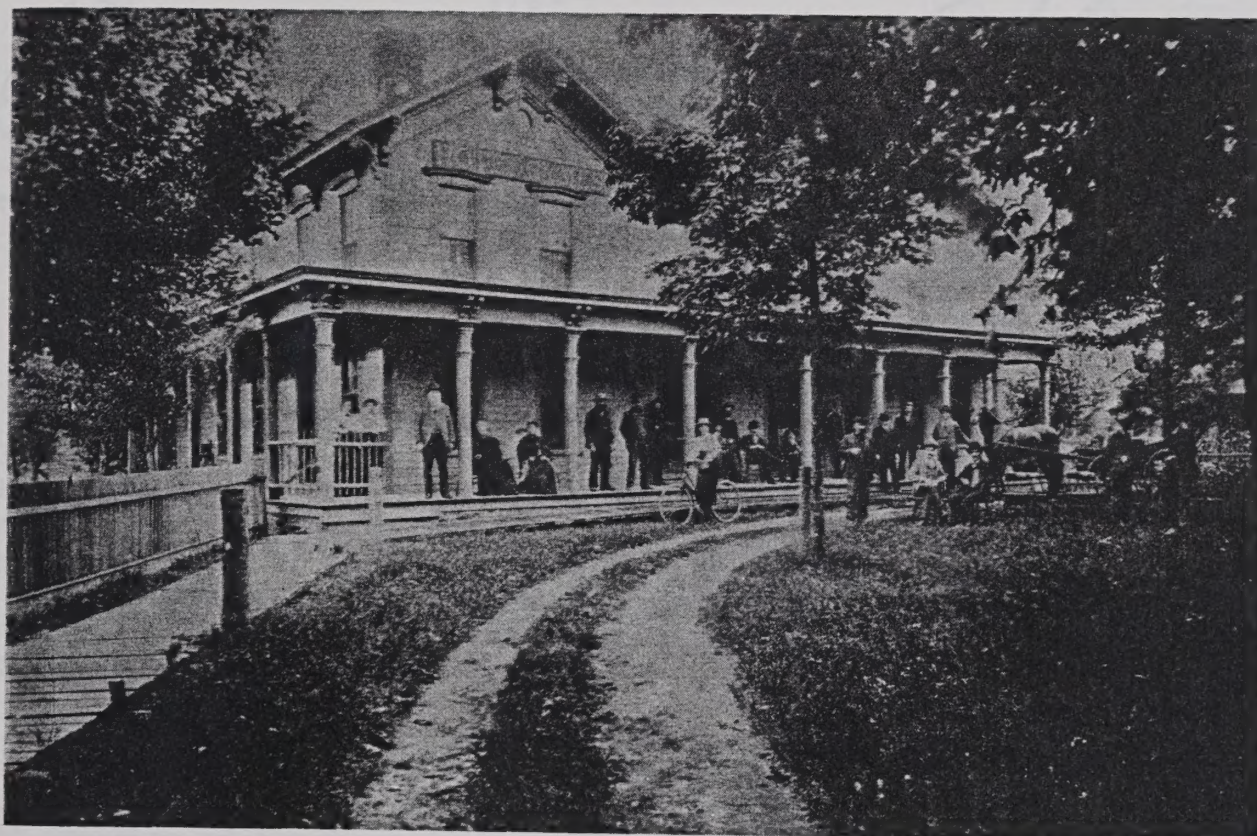








# ST. CHARLES CENTENNIAL



HOTEL SYMES, J. T. SYMES, PROPRIETOR, ST. CHARLES, MICH.

June 16 - 19, 1960

ST. CHARLES, MICHIGAN

ST. CHARLES

CENTENNIAL

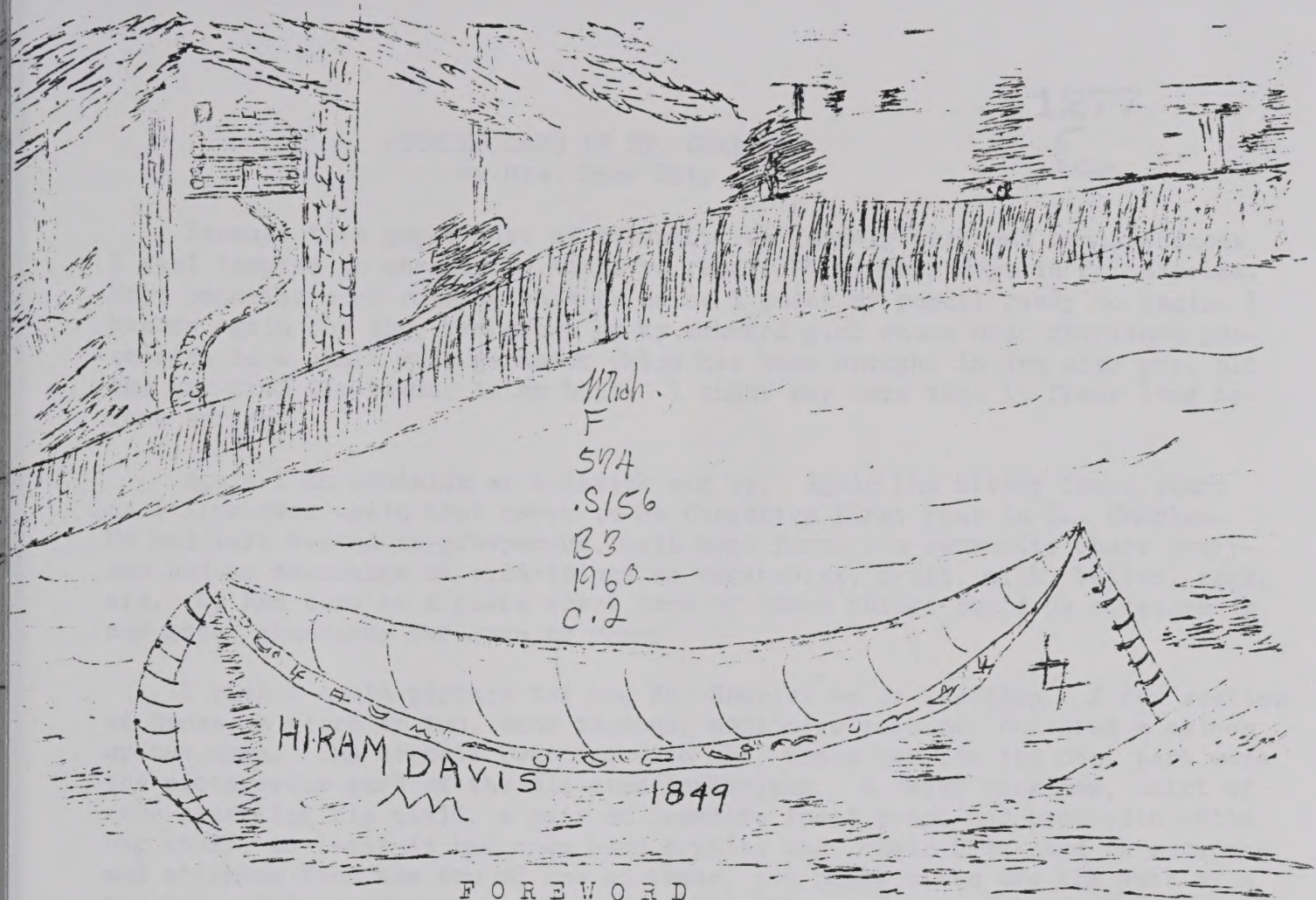
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June 18 - 19, 1960

ST. CHARLES, MICHIGAN





## FOREWORD

The St. Charles Wednesday Study Club is presenting this Centennial booklet to the residents and friends of St. Charles Township as a record of the development of this area during the latter half of the nineteenth century. It is our sincere hope that each of you will find pleasure in reminiscing with us in this brief resume of the beginning of our community. In the writing of such a history, many deserving and interesting personalities may not have been included because of the lack of information; for this we are truly sorry.

The Wednesday Study Club was organized in 1907. One of its charter members, Mrs. Emma (Jay) Doty, was the wife of the first white child born in St. Charles. Mrs. Sarah Davis Lytle, a friend of Mrs. Doty's, was the oldest daughter of the first settler, Hiram Davis. It is to these two people as well as to Mrs. Elizabeth Winters, as the oldest living person born in St. Charles, that we humbly wish to dedicate this Centennial booklet. Mrs. Doty and Mrs. Lytle have written short memoirs of their early experiences as pioneers here. We think it most fitting that we begin this history by presenting to you, in their own words, life as they lived it in the early years of the history of "The Forks".

Before we begin, the committee wishes to thank all those who have contributed their help in presenting this story to you. If it were not for your generous contributions, our history would have been very incomplete. A special thanks is given to Mrs. Elizabeth Winters for her invaluable help in securing much early history.

## THE COMMITTEE

Mrs. William E. Barnhart, Chairman, Mrs. Robert White, Mrs. Howard W. Cornford





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PIONEER DAYS IN ST. CHARLES  
by Mrs. Emma Doty

Because this paper must of necessity be largely personal reminiscences, I feel tempted to change the title to read: MY pioneer days in St. Charles. What memories come rushing back to me as I poise my pencil ready to begin. I become again the shy, overgrown gawky, awkward girl whose most cherished possession is a small rose geranium which has been brought in its clay pot, all the way from Cleveland, in my hand. I might say here that it froze long before spring.

Again I am homesick as homesick can be. Again the bitter tears start as I live over again that never to be forgotten first year in St. Charles. We had left behind us prosperous, well-kept farms - a community where everyone had an abundance of such things as vegetables, fruit, milk, butter, eggs, etc. We had come to a place where none of these things could be obtained in any great abundance for love or money.

I wish I could picture for you St. Charles as it was then. A few scattered homes, a store or two, some saloons, some more saloons, and then a saloon or two more. The streets swarming with men, these men for the most part wore the picturesque garb of the old-time lumberjack - a heavy mackinaw, shirt of some startling big plaid, a pair of trousers faced front and back with white bag stuff, at least it had once been a white bag, their feet shod in snowpacs, and sticking from the top of one of these, you might often see the butt of a revolver while a whiskey bottle bulged the other. But the glory of the whole costume was the sash wound several times around the body and tied over the left hip, the long, fringed ends flapping proudly as the owner walked. These sashes were a gay striped affair and nearly all had a lot of red in them.

I find, upon consulting my sister's old diary, that the town consisted of three stores, five mills, two boarding houses, a hotel and fourteen saloons, besides the bars in the hotel and one of the boarding houses.

Everywhere was sawdust. The streets were thick with it. The floors of the stores were covered with it. Huge piles of green lumber and shingles gave silent but powerful testimony to the fact that this was a lumbering town. The smell of the pine hung in the air; there was nothing but pine, pine, pine. And, oh, the wrath-provoking thing it was to burn the green shingle slabs that people used for fuel. A great pile had always to be stacked behind the stove to dry and the smell of it clung to everything in the house. Often and often the housewife of those other days found herself operating a "fireless" cooker.

You have doubtless heard of the ravenous appetite one gets in the pine woods. Personally, I can only remember this much: we had an appetite, and a big one, for fresh meat, fresh fruit, vegetables, eggs and milk, an appetite that refused to be satisfied with the St. Charles diet. Let me list for you a well stocked larder in pioneer St. Charles. Salt meats, pork, beef and maybe salt fish, beans, dried apples, prunes, rice, raisins, potatoes and butter were occasionally to be had; flour and sugar. Of course, though, the sugar was mostly brown. I have seen it when not a pound of white sugar, or coffee sugar, as it was then spoken of, could be had from any store here, and this was several years after we first came here.





Remember, please, that the day of canned goods was not on hand. The generous store of applebutter and dried fruit that my mother had brought with her was soon exhausted, it being such a pleasure to divide things. It amuses me to think how often we were reminded that "St. Charles is all right now - good enough for anyone to live in - you ought to have been here ten years ago" or something to that effect.

Blackberries and huckleberries were very plentiful a little way out from town a few year later. They came close on the heels of the lumbering operations.

When we all came down with fever and ague that first summer, my father made many trips to Saginaw to get some longed for eatables. Fresh meat he often got by hiring someone to go into the woods and kill game. My father paid them for his day's work; sometimes he got squirrels, sometimes it might be partridges, or a big, wild turkey, and once, I remember, he got a bear cub. You can only realize how welcome these things were when you remember that the meat market came to St. Charles several years behind your humble servant.

These are a part of my pioneer experiences that might be called the shadows of the mental pictures. I can say without a moment's hesitation that Pitchpine gum and wintergreen berries were the bright spots of my childish soul; these two things almost compensated for the lost comforts of civilization.

I might tell you about the first store ever opened in St. Charles. How the entire stock of goods was brought up from Saginaw in an Indian canoe. Replenishment was made sometimes in the same way. Sometimes the trip was made overland, following the old Indian trail, the goods carried in a pack on the back, or if the ice was strong enough, a man sometimes skated down the river and pulled a big hand sled with the needed supplies.

I've heard my mother-in-law tell of this earliest time of all in St. Charles. The Doty's were among the very first settlers, being in fact, the second white family. My husband was the first white child born in St. Charles. I've heard his mother speak so often of the two years that she spent in camp on the Beaver Creek, only two miles from what is now St. Charles, but was then called "The Forks", and in all that time she never saw a white woman. Her good neighbors were all squaws and she said they were indeed good neighbors and when one of her children became sick, the squaws and the Indians as well, did all they could. She said one of the squaws stayed and helped in the care of the baby and the house work for several weeks.

Altogether I have many memories stored away in my mind as well as many relics of those bygone days when St. Charles was one of the earliest of the Michigan lumbering towns.

#### EARLY ST. CHARLES

by Sarah Davis Lytle

NOTE: These are the reminiscences of Mrs. Sarah Davis Lytle McGlockney, the oldest daughter of Hiram Davis, who was the first white man to settle in the neighborhood of St. Charles. He came here in 1849. These memories were compiled by Mrs. Ezra Doty, who interviewed Mrs. McGlockney, and were present-





ed to the Wednesday Study Club in 1912.

It seems not so very long ago that my father, Hiram Davis, came to what is now St. Charles. Of course, it had no name then, but folks spoke of it as "The Forks of Bad River", later it came to be called just "The Forks" and finally St. Charles. I well remember our coming here and the log house my father built for us; that was way back in 1849, and ours was the first home here.

I have no idea how far it might have been to our nearest neighbors; far enough anyhow, that we never thought of neighbors. Our neighbors, in fact, were the Indians, and they were near enough at all times, but they were perfectly friendly and none of us ever felt any fear of them. The younger children chummed with the young Indians, they being their only playmates for a long time.

My brother Nicholas was the second white child born here, and so many squaws came to see him that my younger sister worried lest they might steal him, though my mother sometimes said they probably wouldn't have taken him as a gift.

Soon after we settle here, my father helped cut a road through to Chesaning; then folks soon began to settle here. Before this road was made, everything had to come by the river route in canoes and rafts, or else "packed" in. Orasmus Doty's folks came a few years after we did and were the next ones to settle here. Mr. Doty put in a small stock of goods and sold them from one room of his house. Later, he built a store building and had more goods. The first place where things could be bought was at Charles Kimberly's, though he didn't keep a regular store until years later. He only brought up stuff to supply his camps and the men who worked for him.

After we had been here for awhile, my father and two other men built the first saw mill. When the mill began to make lumber, my mother and I thought to have an addition built to our log house, which was pretty small for so large a family. The men were so slow that my mother and myself finally built it ourselves, and a pretty good kitchen we thought it was, too.

Then my father built a log hut and hired a school teacher from Chesaning just to teach our own children. The teacher's name was Augusta Griswold. I don't remember how long she taught us, but I think until the public school got started a few years later.

The next family to move here were people by the name of Carpenter. They had two children, both boys. I can't really tell who came next, but quite a few families moved in about that time.

The first frame house was put up right close to our log home. It was built by Mr. Carpenter. These two houses stood for many years on the south side of the river where the railroad was afterwards built. It is now the Waterworks Park. I think this should be named "Pioneer Park" and some memorial or marker be erected, either by the Club or the citizens of St. Charles.

In the summer of 1853, my father built a big log hotel and that was where I was married, the next year, February 22, 1854. We were the first white folks





to be married here. My husband, Freeman Lytle, had been here a year or two and had built the second saw mill, which stood for years afterwards and was later known as the Penoyer Mill. //We were married by a Mr. Cooper, a Justice of the Peace, who had moved in a little while before. The hotel stood where the vacant lot is now, right in the heart of the town. Some years afterwards, the hotel burned and the barn back of it (where McCrory's livery barn now stands) was remodeled and made into a hotel, but this was after my father had sold it.

It seems such a little while to look back to those early days, long before the Railroad, or even the wagon road. Most of the lumbering was done with oxteams; the lumber and shingles made here were taken down the river to Saginaw on rafts and also on large lighters. The first steamboat I recall on the river was the Buena Vista.

I remember very well when a few men met at our house and decided to organize the township and name it St. Charles in honor of Charles Kimberly, who by this time had built a large new store and had big business interests here. This store is still standing, being the McLeighan Hardware Store. The first election was held at our house. I think it was in the Spring of 1853. The first postoffice was started about this time and a man by the name of Oliver was the first Postmaster.

Miss Griswold, the teacher, and Mr. Doty organized a Sunday School.

Our first Fourth of July celebration brought out quite a crowd. We had a big dinner out-of-doors, speeches, and some contests. One I remember was a log rolling contest in which all the men got soaking wet, and a man by the name of Hickey got his head hurt, not seriously, but enough that it bled a lot.

Looking back, it doesn't seem to me that we had such a hard time of it. To be sure, there was a lot of hard work for all the work had to be done at home; baking, washing, mending, making all the clothes we wore. All the socks and mittens were knitted by hand, and how fast boys and men did wear out the feet of their socks! The mittens seemed never to be all darned up good. In every kitchen you would find a crock of sourings, as they were called. This was a stone crock filled with flour and water mixed, kept where it was warm and let to get sour for use in baking. Every night a little more was added to it. There were no cows here, you see, so no one had any sour milk, so we had to use sourings and soda. No one knew anything of baking powder in those days. Nothing in the world smells worse than wet dirty socks drying behind the stove, unless it is a crock of these sourings.

In summing up those old days of St. Charles before the railroad came, I recall lots of hard work, some fun, lots of good neighbors, ready and willing to do anything needing to be done from swaddling the new-born to shrouding the dead.

What was the worst thing we had to put up with? Cork boots, made me the maddest. Your floor was always all cut up with the pesky things. And the best? Well, I guess that was the dances we had after a few families got here.

Thus we have the beginning of pioneering in a new settlement. A place





that was rich in timber, furs, coal, and other minerals just waiting for these courageous and strong-hearted settlers to build a new way of life.

Although Hiram Davis and his family were the first settlers, arriving here from New York in 1849, Charles S. Kimberly and his father, Ebenezer purchased land here in 1848 from the government. Even before this time, the American Fur Company which John Jacob Astor formed in New York, purchased land in the St. Charles area. Land was plotted out on the East bank of the Beaver Creek and a tannery established. It is believed that this was the first industry. But since this location was not suitable for a town because of high water, another plotting was made west of the Beaver Creek. This was between Beaver Creek and the North Branch of the Bad River or Matchi-sibi. Along this North street and turning west, a village began to be built, and the name given to it was "The Forks". "The Forks" actually was a triangle that was formed by the two bodies of water with the village being built back of this triangle.

It is from these beginnings that transferring of property started. Charles Carroll having purchased lands from the American Fur Company started selling it to private citizens in 1848. The government also was selling lands. One parcel of land purchased by Kimberly from the government cost \$20.00. What a difference in price of lands then as compared to the present.

Even Hiram Davis purchased his lands from Charles S. Kimberly in 1850.

Hiram Davis had a daughter by the name of Sarah. You have already been introduced to her as the wife of Freeman Lytle, first couple to be married at The Forks. Freeman Lytle arrived here in 1851 from New York. One of their sons was named Hiram, and he has descendants still living in our township. Hiram married Sarah Louise Price, a daughter of Benjamin and Clara Price of Fergus. Of their six children, three of whom are still living; Ward Lytle on the old homestead on Brant Road, Freeman Lytle of this village, and Elizabeth Holton now in Pennsylvania.

Orsamus and Loretta Doty came by canoe and rafts in 1851 as it was impossible to get through the thick forests. Their son Jay Doty married Emma Russell, author of the pioneer story you have read. They had two children, Ilah and Guy. Many of you have been acquainted with Ilah Brownlee Gale. She contributed so much of her time to your village library. Her children are still living. One of them, Barbara, lives in her mother's home.

Charles S. Kimberly, although he played a very important role in the development of our town, actually only lived here from 1863-1868. His home really was in Coruuna most of his life. He moved to Saginaw with his mother in 1868, and was married later in 1870. He died in 1875 at the age of 49. His role here began in 1848 when he began purchasing land from the government. It wasn't until 1852-53 that he actually became engaged in lumbering not only in St. Charles Township, but also in Brant and Marion. Having been educated in New York and being a man of wealth, he had a great understanding and sympathy for his fellow man. Because of these wonderful personal traits and his conduct, as well as his dress, he was endeared to the populace. Out of respect and love for him, the people decided to name their town, St. Charles, in honor of him who had done so much for their welfare.

J. F. Synes came to St. Charles in 1855. He was well known for his saw





mill and for his large hotel and Symes Hall, now Bellenbaum's store.

Jared Freeman was one of our earlier settlers who developed a general store as well as lumber trade here. He owned many thousands of acres of land from which valuable timber was to be had. He came to St. Charles when he was 20 years of age in 1854, with five dollars in his pocket, the clothes he wore, and those contained in his satchel.

His large beautiful home is now owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Adolph Goldynia. He formerly lived on Water Street in the home now occupied by Charles Thiele.

Alson L. Wetmore came to St. Charles in 1854 to operate the first giant grist mill in St. Charles Township. He lived where Grace Wilson now lives. Later it was sold to W.W. Eddy. Hinkley and C. Ashman bought it later. In 1856, he married Elizabeth Doty. He first was engaged in operating a saw-mill in Marion Township.

Alson had two brothers, Delos and Orlando, who settled here and worked with Alson.

Delos Wetmore married a sister of Rolland and Henry Case, both physicians in St. Charles. Delos had a son named Albert, who later married a girl from Canada by the name of Florence Campbell. Their descendants are Lester and Burton of Merrill and Elizabeth Wetmore Gould of Henlock. Two other sons, Clare and Clayton are deceased.

The Holiday brothers were also old timers, coming to St. Charles in 1855. They originally came from New York State. There were five brothers; John, Benjamin, Grove, Watt, George and Miles.

John Holiday settled in the Jones District. George, Grove, Watt, Miles, and Benjamin in the "Old North Town". Benjamin was one of the first physicians that St. Charles had. Many of us will remember the musically inclined Lulu Frye, daughter of George Holiday. She inherited her talent from her father. Their old home may still be seen on Belle Avenue. In the old days, it was one of the show places of St. Charles with its large southern style veranda and beautiful gardens. We all enjoyed her playing the piano in accompaniment to the old silent movies.

John Holiday's son George, who is still sadly missed by friends as well as his family, was born in Brant Township. His family is well known by us all: Earl, Elwood, Barbara, Oleta, and Mary. John has told of his days in a log cabin near the Hall home in the Jones District, to his son George. He always recalled the friendly Indians. It seems that the Indians always felt welcome in their home. At night, the doors to the cabin were never closed, and in the morning it was not unusual to find one or two Indians curled up in front of the open fireplace. Grove Holiday operated the little Well steam-boat up and down from St. Charles to Saginaw with Chauncy Freeman.

Although the United States census of 1850 records only a few settlers, we must name others who came in this early period. Not many facts are known to this writer about them, we are sure they contributed much to the early settlement of this village.



They were:

Alpheus and Frank Oliver	Franklin Moore
Mr. Carpenter	David Gould
Benjamin Colvin	E. L. Gould
Francis Harris	Joseph and David Thompson
Isaac Bennett	Samuel Hunt
R. R. Thompson	

#### THE THREE EARLY HOMES - 1849-1859

The first home was built by Hiram Davis for his family on the south side of the river where the railroad was built later. Sarah states in her memoirs that it was rather small for their large family so she and her mother built a kitchen themselves.

O. Doty built his first log home on Beaver Creek about two miles from the Forks.

A frame home was then built by Mr. Carpenter next to the Davis home.

#### THE FIRST SCHOOLS AND SUNDAY SCHOOL

Hiram Davis felt the need of the 3 R's for his children so, in 1852, he built a log hut and engaged Augusta Griswold from Chesaning to teach his own children. The same year, Mr. Doty and Miss Griswold began the first Methodist Sunday School.

The first public school in The Forks was started in 1854 by Miss Griswold, followed by a Miss Joslin. The tough, hardy youngsters didn't like the idea of attending school and succeeded in making the day's work difficult for Miss Joslin and she resigned. Mrs. C.J. Bixby was hired for the new year of 1855 for \$1.00 per day. She proved more than a match for the youngsters. Having won their respect by her firm manner, she succeeded where Miss Joslin had failed. In 1857, John Thorn taught for one year.

The story of Mrs. C.J.E. Bixby was very interesting. Not only was she an excellent teacher but, according to her granddaughter, Mrs. Roscoe Rice of Chesaning, a very talented musician. Hers was the first piano in St. Charles. She had made a trip to London, England to attend the World's Fair, and she had purchased it there. Many an eager student had lessons on this beautiful big "up-right". Mrs. Rice recalls seeing it when Mrs. Bixby died. Mr. and Mrs. C.J.E. Bixby adopted Mrs. Rice's mother, Mary, when she was a little girl. Mr. Bixby was a farmer. One time in returning from Albee territory with a load of prairie grass, he was struck down during a thunder storm which injured him for life. Later in 1872, Mary Bixby married John Gollwitzer, a clerk in the Kanzig store. There were nine children in their family. Mrs. Bixby also adopted two other children; their names were Ann and Gay. Ann married a Mr. Wallace and Gay's wife's name was Mary. After the death of her husband, Mrs. Bixby married a retired lawyer by the name of E. Ryness. In 1887, Mr. Ryness was Justice of the Peace, and Mrs. Rice recalls that their home was immense; it was across the first bridge, but it was taken down to be replaced by a sawmill in the early '70 's. Mary Bixby was educated in Saginaw. In 1868, she took the train to Saginaw and stayed with Lawyer Crane while she went to school.





The first school records from the Michigan Department of Public Instruction for District #1, located on the south of North Street, was in 1858. The director was Samuel Hunt, and he served from 1858 to 1862. There were fifty-two children attending school that year, and they attended school for three and a half months. The two teachers received \$25.00. The school had one hundred fifty volumes of books. Jared Freeman was the school inspector.

In 1859, School District #2 was formed with Alpheus Cliver as director, and he served in this capacity until 1863. There were seventy students the first year. They had two male teachers and so did the old town school of District #1.

The District #2 school was located where the Methodist now have their church on Belle Avenue.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE FORKS

The Forks, having reached the minimum number of residents required to organize a township did so on Monday, April 1, 1853 at the home of Hiram Davis. The electors were David Gould, Isaac Bennett, and Hiram Davis. In the election, David Gould was elected the first supervisor.

Other men who held township offices during these years were:

Jared Freeman, Supervisor for three years, Township Clerk for two years, Village Trustee for two years, and Justice of the Peace - one term.

A Mr. Cooper was the first Justice of the Peace. He married the first couple in St. Charles, Sarah Davis and Freeman Lytle.

The second supervisor for St. Charles Township was Isaac Bennett in 1854.

R.R. Thompson was supervisor for the year 1858.

#### THE POST OFFICE - 1849-1859

The first Post Office was started in 1853 with Frank Oliver as postmaster. Another early postmaster was Alson L. Wetmore who served for three years. The post office was built between the property where the Pure Gas now stands and the former Hartley garage.

#### HOTELS AND GENERAL STORES

In 1853, Hiram Davis built a large log hotel. Sarah and Freeman were married in this hotel, located where the old water works stood.

The first general store was in a room of the home of the Doty family. A small stock of groceries was kept here.

The second store to open was that of Jared Freeman.

The next small store was built by C.S. Kimberly. Mr. Kimberly really established this first place for supplies for his own sawmills. During these





early years, goods had to be shipped in from Saginaw by boat. The earliest boat to do this was the Buena Vista. Other smaller boats owned by Kimberly made the trip for his personal stock.

Later, he built a much larger store with a greater variety of goods. It was located where the McKeighan Hardware Building now stands.

## INDUSTRIES

The first industry known to have existed at or near The Forks in 1849 was a tannery, established by the American Fur Company.

"Man" Sanderson, in one of his papers, states that one of the earliest buildings and businesses here was a Trading Post operated by the North Western Trading Company. It stood near the corner where Charles Brownell's home is located. This was before any of our known permanent settlers came.

Sarah Davis Lytle states that her father and two others built the first sawmill and were also the first to make lumber.

In 1852, Freeman Lytle started the second sawmill. Another mill was started in this same year by C.H. McArthur. He also made shingles. Clark and Wisner had a mill at the fork of the Matchshisibi. The following year, a mill was built by Smith and Gould for a Mr. Corey. Charles Parks established himself as a carpenter in 1852.

In 1855, J.T. Symes came to The Forks with a capital of \$25,000. He invested in lumber mills. He had three mills which burned, but each time he rebuilt - in 1861, 1869, and 1876.

Edwin Jones built his saw and shingle mill in 1857, and he continued this business until 1874.

Two other mills came into existence at the same time; namely, Wendals Sawmill and Bradley & Company.

Another important job at this time was the blacksmith and cooper trades. Among the first to be in this business was George Wallace. He started in 1859. At this same time, he was superintendent of the school.

Charles Kimberly started operating sawmills during this period, he and Freeman Lytle operating the largest of the mills.

Also L. Wetmore established the first gristmill at The Forks.

## THE YEARS BETWEEN - 1860-1869

St. Charles is now the official name of the new township. Although the village did not become incorporated until 1869, the survey and change of names took place earlier. The original name in 1853 was not St. Charles; it was Charles. The township now has a population of five hundred five residents, although more than a hundred and fifty of these were Chippewa Indians, according to the United States census. During these years, the industries established in the late 1850's continued to grow and expand.





There were more people settling in the township and clearing of land was now starting in earnest. The road that Hiram Davis started through the woods to Chesaning enabled people to come into our area easier. Another new-comer was the George Hitchings, in 1867. Mr. Hitchings served as blacksmith until his death in 1879. He had five children; Elizabeth, Carrie, Helen, Ida, and Albert. Elizabeth married Henry Winters. Her three children are living in St. Charles: Mrs. Helen Dunn, Mrs. Jessie Eureka, and Mrs. Frances Baker. Helen married Joe Brownell, and though they are both deceased, we remember them well as owners of the Brownell General Store. Their sons, Charles and Stanley are still living. Ida married Harvey Wilson. Their daughter, Grace, lives in St. Charles.

Mrs. Elizabeth Winters, born in 1869, is the oldest resident living in our village who was born here.

Mrs. Elizabeth Kanzig came here in 1867, purchasing land from government as did John C. Davis and Nathan Hall.

Perhaps, one of the important developments of this period was the organization of the village. The first officers elected as a result of the election December 6, 1869 were as follows:

R.R. Thompson	-	President
A.L. Wetmore	-	Trustee
Lewis Penoyer	-	Trustee
Joseph Anderson	-	Trustee
H.S. Guilford	-	Trustee
Alfred Stewart	-	Trustee
William Ashman	-	Trustee
A.L. Simmons	-	Clerk

A.L. Wetmore was now township Supervisor.

The various religious groups made great strides during these years. Heretofore, the various groups held their meetings in homes, store buildings, and school houses.

Both the Methodists and Adventists established church buildings in 1869. Charles Kimberly gave the Methodist the land to erect their church. The first church was built where DeShones store is at the present time. The Methodist parsonage was built in 1866 while Rev. J.H. Cornalia was pastor. The Rev. C. Simpson was pastor during the time the new church was erected. The church was dedicated by Rev. J.S. Smart, with no indebtedness. Among those who subscribed most heavily to the enterprise were Mr. Kimberly, Louis Penoyer, J.T. Symes, Francis Ackley, Jared Freeman, John Adams, Drs. Rollins and Henry Case and William Conklin.

The Adventists built their church for \$2,500. One of the first to preach the Adventist doctrine here was the Rev. M.E. Cornell in the old school house during the winter of 1860-61. Elder George Adair was an early teacher.

Of the early charter members in 1860's there were:

Joel Gulick

Andrew and Ellen Minto



John Holiday	Charles and Adolph Schnupp
Watson Holiday	Peter Ruffer
Amy Holiday	Ann and E.H. Grimley
Delos Wetmore	Diantha Griggs
Alfred Wilkinson	Goodwin Kelsey
James Wilkinson	Joseph and Elizabeth Dudley
William Atherton	Alfred Spencer
Martha Adair	William Cory
Loretta Guilford	Martin Rathburn
Hiram Guilford	Samila Harris
Waldon Guilford	Sarah Farah

The Presbyterian congregation was organized in 1864 and they built a church on the west side of the Methodist parsonage in 1865. It was sold in 1881 to the Catholics for their church. Mrs. Winters was baptized in this church because, as her mother told her, it was the only church in which to have it done.

Many of the people mentioned in the above list settled here during this period.

#### THE CIVIL WAR VETERANS

The civil war period marked a rapid growth in industry as well as population. As a result of the war, many veterans were given land by the Federal Government in payment for services rendered. Consequently, many of them came to our area.

It is unfortunate that we do not have a complete list of those who actually left for service from our township. Those the writer is including are those who fought in the war and came to St. Charles afterward, as well as those who enlisted directly from here. You will undoubtedly recognize the names of their descendants.

Those names which we know of are:

George T. Swim, Captain  
 Edward Stimpson, Major  
 Francis Ackley, Captain  
 Noah S. Wood, Major  
 Edwin H. Jones, Orderly Sergeant  
 Nathaniel Reed  
 Russell Webb  
 George Hitchings served as a blacksmith in the Civil War  
 Frank Hullen  
 Daniel W. Rowley - A prisoner at the Libby Prison in the South for a while during the War.  
 Mr. Craig  
 Mr. Trewryer  
 Frank B. Gage  
 Mr. Paull  
 J. D. Booth  
 Charles Bradt, M.D.  
 Andrew Kanzig

Note: William Sanderson enlisted but because of illness was unable to serve.





The soldiers and sailors of Saginaw County organized a union after the war. Captain Francis Ackley served as Vice-President and Major Noah S. Wood as Treasurer. Major Stimson acted as chairman for St. Charles Township. The second reunion was held September 15, 16 and 17, 1880. Although many reunions were held thereafter, none are recorded.

Benjamin Frank Gage met with the boys from the First Michigan Cavalry, Company M in 1914. Mr. Gage fought with General Custer. When he was mustered out in 1866, he had been with General Custer in Utah on detached service.

#### SCHOOLS OF THE 1860-1969 PERIOD

District #1 and District #2 school enrollments were twenty-five and forty-nine, respectively, in 1860 and the children were now attending eight months out of the year. Samuel Hunt and Alpheus Oliver were still directors. Of special interest to we who are in the education field was the statement made by the school inspector, William Sanderson, at the close of his inspection in 1860. "The morals and behavior are good. The progress in scholarship is not so rapid as is desirable. One great feature in a new county like ours is the difficulty of procuring thoroughly educated, systematic and energetic teachers. Regular attendance good."

In 1862 District #1 had a new director, Delos A. Wetmore, who continued in this capacity until 1865. Then Addison Wood became director until 1868. John Adams then served for two years.

In the School District #2 Alpheus Oliver was still serving as director and continued until 1863. He was replaced by Francis Harris who served for two years. Joseph Anderson, Joseph Sanderson and D. A. Wetmore then served until 1869. In 1869 there were forty-three pupils in District #1 and one hundred eight in District #2. The buildings, as assessed, were considered to be worth \$400.00 and \$1,500.00.

#### TRANSPORTATION

Up until 1867 and 1868 travel was mainly by foot, horse, oxen and boats. Trails were becoming increasingly numerous. Corduroy and plank roads were coming into existence.

The greatest event in this ten year period was the coming of the Jackson, Saginaw and Lansing railroad.

Mrs. Elizabeth Winters recalls her father, Mr. Hitchings, telling of the first trip taken by the honeymooning couple, V. Crandall and wife Angie, to Lansing. The coach was a flat car with no covering. They sat on chairs and when they started Mrs. Crandall's head veil sailed across country on the wings of the wind. The Crandalls lived where Mrs. Ella Gage now lives. It is one of the oldest homes in our village.

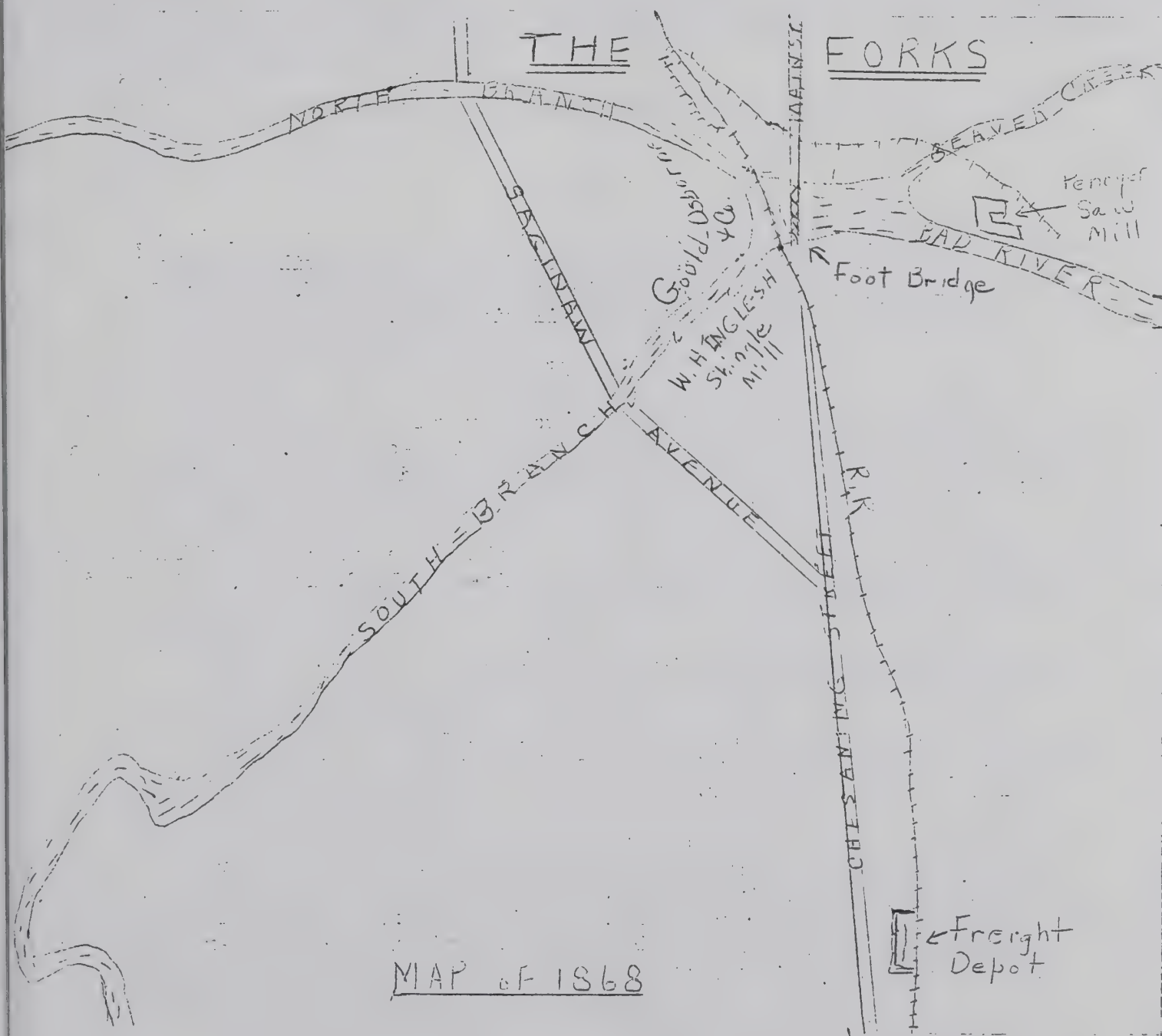
It was a great day for all small villages when the railroad came through. This meant more lumber and all its various products could be shipped in abundance. So, in entering into the period of the eighteen seventies we find a prospering community.





The boats that did much traveling back and forth carrying passengers and mail from Saginaw after the Buena Vista were: The Little Nell, operated by Grove Holiday and Chauncy Freeman, and The Louisa. The Excelsior was built by Captain Francis Ackley and was one of the last large boats in operation.

Mr. Nathan Reed recalls his father telling of the Indians taking their families to the Indian Trading Post in Saginaw by pulling them on travois poles. Later Mr. Hitchings made small chains and spikes to hold these logs together. They were called rafts and were used by many people to haul things.





## THE ADVENT OF THE YEARS 1870-1879

The village presidents during this period changed about every year. They were in their respective order: Lewis Penoyer (2 years), Francis Ackley, Alson L. Wetmore, W. W. Eddy, Henry Case, W. W. Eddy (2 years), Francis Ackley, Henry Case and Francis Ackley. There were always four trustees elected. Village clerks during this period were: A. L. Simmons, Addison J. Wood (3 years), James W. Harden, John Gallwitzer (2 years), C. M. Butterfield (2 years), Jared Freeman, A. L. Wetmore, Francis Ackley, William A. Conklin (2 years), V. L. Parsons, D. Paull (2 years), and George A. Wallace (2 years). The township clerks were: A. L. Simons, A. J. Wood, Henry Hirst, A. J. Wood, J. B. Adams, George Goodrich, D. O. Smith, George G. Goodrich and D. O. Smith.

St. Charles township now has a population in 1870 of one thousand one hundred eighty-five. It has more than doubled its size in this ten year period.

### A NEW DEPOT

Charles S. Kimberly, according to a paper written by Mrs. Sears, gave the land, as well as building the first depot, for the village. In 1870 the first telegraph operator and ticket agent, Charles M. Butterfield, was appointed, and he held the office until his death.

### NEWSPAPERS

The first printing office and newspaper was owned and edited by Daniel Griggs. It was a four column folio and was issued weekly. It was started May 1, 1877 and lasted six months. It was called the Angel of Light and advocated the spiritualistic ideas.

The second newspaper was the St. Charles Times which was published for the first time August 3, 1877. It was edited by D. C. Ashman, and lasted for eleven weeks.

The third venture was made by Williams and McCauley beginning March 23, 1878 and continuing until September 1880.

The St. Charles Independent was the fourth newspaper and its publisher was Mrs. William M. Conklin. The office was located where Dick Browne's Service Station now stands.

There was another newspaper published in 1880 called the St. Charles Leader. It was edited by Gropingieser and Rice. In 1881 their list of subscribers numbered five hundred. The subscription price was \$1.50. Later, Mr. and Mrs. Bement purchased Mrs. Conklin's paper. They published it for twenty-one years until 1924. Mr. and Mrs. David Steele then carried on very capably for twenty-eight years.







The St. Charles Post Office at the corner of Bell and Saginaw Streets.  
From left to right: Mr. & Mrs. Ethie Webb, Layman Whaley, Will  
Mertz, John Reynolds, Wirt Crane, Mrs. W. Crane, May Rowley,  
Daniel Rowley and Ella Rowley Gage.



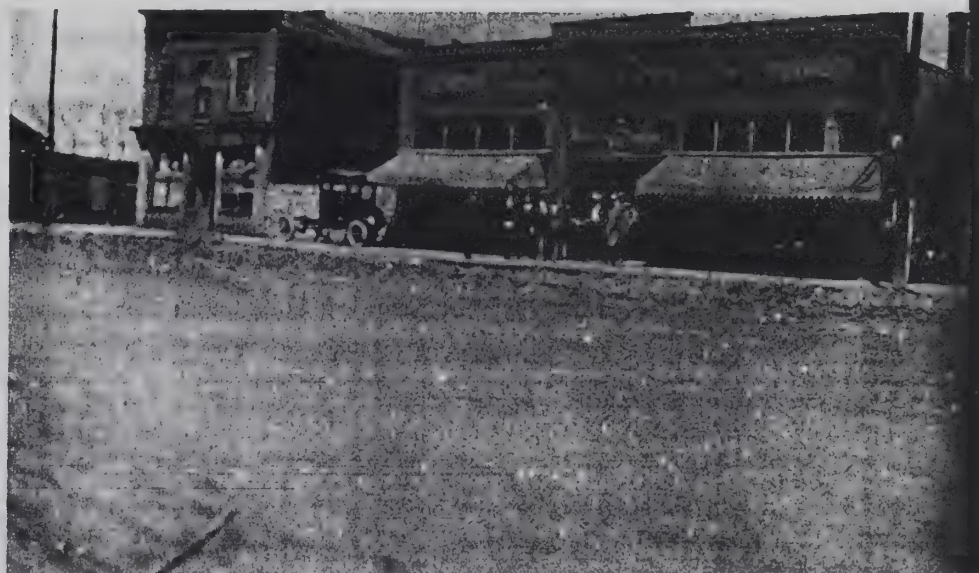
The new Town Hall and the then modern fire equipment drawn by horse.







The bakery owned by Charles and Elizabeth Schweizer in the early 1900's. Louis Gould now has his store in it. They later sold to Heland and Maude Crampton, who in turn sold to Howard and Alice Crampton.



The then new P. A. Hartley Ford Sales building in the early 1900's.



Miss O'Mara's hat shop purchased from Miss Bernier. They both fashioned their first hats. Their first shop was located where the Hulien Drug Store is now.







The coiling of hoops for barrels,  
Ray Manchester, Albert Hitchings  
and Samuel Myers.



William Rowley and Elmer Millard  
drilling a test well for coal.



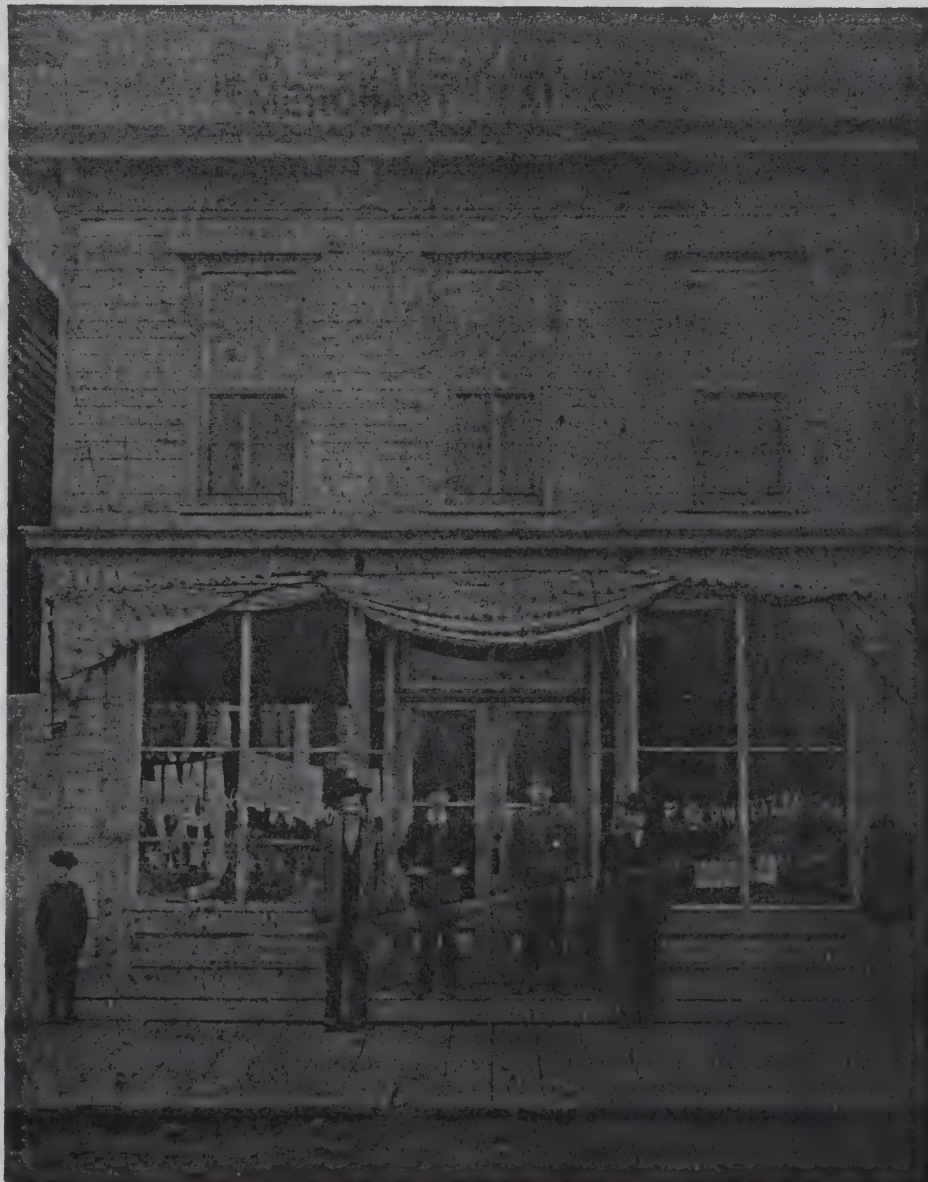
The new depot in the early 1900's.







One of the first rural  
carrier's sled with  
John Reynolds as driver



The Peter and Catherine Schweizer Store in the late 1880's.





## HOTELS, GENERAL STORES AND SPECIAL WORK

The Diamond Hotel built by Andrew B. Diamond, a United States Marshall, was one of the first hotels. It was located on East Bell and Wayne Streets. Alfred Stewart erected one across from the Hinterman building. He also built the home of A. T. Sanderson on Belle Avenue. John Verling's hotel was across the street from the depot. The old Murdock home has a part of this building in it. The Aaron Dorman hotel has a feed and livery barn in connection with it. Mr. Dorman was the first man to run a free ride to and from the depot. It was located about the center of the block between Bell Avenue and Water Street.

A beautiful hotel was that of J. T. Symes, located where Mrs. Peter Hartley and James Langston now live. He also built the Symes Hall.

A favorite hotel of the lumberman was that of Steadman's. It was across the river on the corner lot of the first block on the left of the bridge. It contained a saloon and eating place, as many of the inns did at that time. The town had two doctors, Rolland and Henry Case.

R. D. Guilford made boot calks for running logs.

George Hitchings and Edward Stout worked as blacksmiths for horses and oxen.

George A. Wallace was the attorney, Justice of the Peace, and the proprietor of the Dorman house.

Miles C. Holiday, Frederick Appenzeller, and W. W. Eddy dealt in dry good and general merchandise.

Andrew Kanzig owned a restaurant and saloon. He also made blackberry and grape wines.

S. R. Wallis ran the bakery, as well as a restaurant.

Carl Shepan manufactured furniture and coffins, as well as being a carpenter and joiner.

Alfred Stewart was a dealer in wagons, carriages and sleighs.

Stimson was a lumber inspector and also dealt in lumber.

H. A. Hall and Jacob Winters were carpenters.

C. S. Kimberly and Freeman Lytle dealt in real estate.

## INDUSTRIES OF 1870-1879

The Louis Penoyer Company was one of the largest during the late sixties, as well as in the 1880's. Their principal sawmill was built between the Bad River and the Beaver Creek. They had several mills - some were for shingles, staves, planing lumber, and sawmills. Their holdings included many townships. George Goodrich was one of their early bookkeepers, according to his daughter, Mrs. E. Powell.



The Gould and Osborn Company in 1874 had their mill on the south side of Maple Street and their offices on the north side of Maple Street. They manufactured barrel staves and heading, along with their lumber. They also had holdings in North St. Charles.

W. M. English had a shingle mill located on the northwest corner of the Penoyer Mill yard. It was destroyed by fire but he rebuilt it and that also burned down.

After the burning of the W. H. English shingle mill, located where the grist mill is now, the present grist mill was built by A. L. Wetmore. It was called The Mystic Flouring and Custom Mill. It was later sold to W. W. Eddy.

The Cheese Box and Hoop Factory was established by a Mr. Schuyler. The boxes were made from elm wood. It was reported by Mrs. Winters that the boxes were shipped to Herkimer, New York. Here the famous Herkimer cheese was made; it was known throughout the United States as the best cheese made. Mrs. Winters stated that she tried to get a job there but they told her she was too young.

The St. Charles Stave and Heading factory was put into operation in 1874 by Francis Hood and Victor L. Persons. Their goods were sold and shipped mostly to New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore. A cooper shop was also attached to this mill. This mill was located south of the depot. Frank Hulien was employed there and probably one of their youngest workers during the year 1883 was his son, Claud Hulien, age 7. He was the water boy during the summer months.

### SOCIETIES

The earliest Lodge seems to be the Masons. The St. Charles Lodge No. 313 worked under a dispensation for about one year and received its charter January 29, 1874. The first officers under the charter were: Henry Case, W. M., Mason L. Dexter, S.W. and Alson L. Wetmore, J.W..

The next society was the Odd Fellows - Perseverance Lodge No. 253. It was chartered February 19, 1875. The charter members were: R. C. Meyers, J. M. Silsby, Nelson Hickey, Benjamin Colvin, A. Cogswell, J. D. Thomas, Thomas Russell, Charles Parks and Abraham K. Stoner.

The Knights of Honor, St. Charles Lodge No. 1,642, was instituted April 25, 1879 with twenty-three charter members. Their first officers were: C. M. Butterfield, Dictator, Tobias L. Thompson, Vice-Dictator, R. J. Webb, Reporter, W. W. Eddy, Treasurer. The objects of this society were fraternity, benevolence and mutual insurance.

Another lodge was the Good Templars. The St. Charles chapter was organized April 7, 1875 with twenty-four members. The officers in 1881 were: James Brott, W.C.T., Mrs. Abar, W.V.T., and George Stewart, R.S. The Good Templars purchased the Presbyterian Church for their meetings and later sold it to the Catholics.





## NEW CHURCHES

The Catholic congregation was organized in about 1864. The Catholics held their meetings for several years in rented halls, homes and, according to Mrs. Frenschoe, many services were held in what is now the Allan Hardware and the Diamond Hotel. Many people drove to Saginaw for special services. In 1881 the Good Templars sold their building to the Catholics. The new parish was visited by Rev. Fr. Van der Hayden, Pastor, of Saginaw City. After this pastor left for his native home in Holland, Rev. Fr. Ries of Saginaw was established here. Under his leadership the first Catholic cemetery was purchased.

The Baptist church had its start in the late 1880's. Their services are reported as being held in the Methodist and Adventist Churches. In 1884 they bought the site of the school of District #2 and held church there until they built the brick church now owned by the Methodist.

### The Older Homes of St. Charles

Homes built before 1877 in St. Charles are:

<u>Owners Now</u>	<u>Owners Then</u>
1. Sam Whaley	Carl Shepan's home where the V.F.W. now stands
2. H. W. Cornford	J. Bunting
3. Frank Weigold	Grand Army Republic Hall
4. Mrs. Ella Gage	S. Crandell (1868)
5. Elzie Spencer	Francis Ackley
6. Dr. Russell	D. Paul
7. William Hoffman	D. Phelps
8. Mrs. Elizabeth Winters	J. Matthews
9. Aldo Hulien	J. H. Barker
10. Harry Donaldson	W. Larned
11. Frank Erdmann	F. Woodward
12. Burton DeYoung, Sr.	J. T. Symes
13. Arthur Gillion	A. Orton
14. The former Lula Frye	George Holiday
15. Harkins home on Chesaning St.	G.F. Brown, later V.L. Parsons & Grimley
16. John Thurston	J. Elwell
17. Ray Clipper	Dr. Rolland Case
18. Fred Berg	E. Stout
19. Joseph Knezek	David Panny, then Bements
20. Paul Kragenbrinks	Adams and Freeman
21. Mrs. Ethel Wheatley	J. H. Barker (built it)
22. Stanley Kapusto	R. B. Oliver
23. Miss May Rowley	W. Deibt
24. F. Heineman (hotel)	J. Losch (home)
25. Catholic Church	J. M. Wilkinson's
26. Anthony Bruno	Freeman Lytle, Sr.
27. Harry Bruno	Freeman Lytle, Sr.'s son
28. A. Bixby	Doty
29. Corner of Bell & Wayne St.	M. C. Holiday



Owners NowOwners Then

30. Myron Reyher	R. J. Webb
31. Louis Gould	W. M. Smith
32. Mrs. J. Craig	R. D. Guilford
33. A. Remainder	A. Nichols
34. Joe Murphy	W. A. Conklin (1868)
35. Edgar Cossou	Methodist Parsonage
36. DeShones Groceries	Methodist Church
37. Methodist Church	School #2
38. Carl Grubaugh	School #1
39. Edgar Turner	W. W. Eddy
40. Grace Wilson	H. A. Hall
41. Jared Freeman	Adolph Goldynia
42. Present Methodist Sunday School House	Penoyer, Gollwitzer and Lewis

### SCHOOLS OF 1870-1879

For the next ten years the school population steadily increased in District #2 until it was necessary to have three teachers. In 1870 the school was assessed at \$1,500.00. With well over a hundred children, school directors during this ten year period were: D. A. Wetmore for five years or until 1875, William A. Conklin for three years and Henry Case for two years.

In District #1 the school directors were: Jacob Sarr, Josiah M. Caldwell for two years, E. A. Stimson, Thomas S. Guilford, Samuel Hunt for two years and E. A. Stimson in 1879.

Mrs. Winters recalls that when she started to school she was first sent to District #1, then to District #2 the following day. She said some of them hardly knew where they would be going because the schools were so over-crowded. I presume the season of the year would be a factor in the enrollment.

Claud Hulien recalls his teacher, Adah Jones, as having a spell down one day using three letter words. He was seven years of age at this time. She said to Claud, "hop" -- he hopped across the room. He was very embarrassed to learn that he was to have spelled it instead of acting the word out.

Mrs. Winters' first teacher in District #3 was Sarah Hatt. She later married Henry Teft. Three other teachers she remembers are: Oleo Adams, Willard Fay, Eva Russell and Henry Teft.

In bringing to a close these few written pages of the years 1870-1879, we begin to close the curtains on the great lumbering days of St. Charles. The kind pine is being depleted and the oak is now the main source of timber, but the names of our lumber barons will long be remembered. Kimberly, Penoyer, Freeman, Gould and Osburn; also the names of three firsts - Lytle, Davis and Doty.





## THE YEARS BETWEEN 1860-1900

A busy business man in St. Charles during the early years of 1875 and throughout the 1890's was George Goodrich, father of Fred Goodrich and Mrs. Elizabeth Powell. On his arrival here he was employed as bookkeeper for Penoyer and Co.. He then purchased a log building on the corner of East Bell and Saginaw Street and opened a furniture shop along with the undertaking business. He had this business for forty-five years. In connection with these businesses he had a jewelry shop, and his specialty was that of piercing ears. To pierce ears he would place a cork on the back of the ear and draw a silk threaded needle through the ear. The customer was then told to draw the silk thread back and forth daily until it was healed. They were then ready for the earrings.

In 1876-78 and 1880 he served as township clerk, as well as being a member of the St. Charles District #2 school board. Mr. Goodrich, during the years, was fire chief, the first town marshal, clerk in the post office and eventually postmaster. It would stand to reason that he had to remodel and enlarge the log building.

### THE POST OFFICE 1880-1900

In 1880 George Wallace was postmaster. His clerk was George G. Goodrich. During the time that Grover Cleveland was president, George G. Goodrich served as postmaster. The next postmaster was W. Mertz. Serving as clerks for him were: Ed. Mertz and later May Rowley (1902). Dale Downing was postmaster for eight years. Miss Rowley continued as clerk until 1922. Then she became the first postmistress, and held this office until 1934. Mrs. Ella Gage, her sister, was a clerk under W. Mertz.

The first rural mail carrier was Daniel Rowley. He started in 1899 or 1900. Mr. Rowley came to St. Charles in 1882. He lived on what is known today as the Crippa farm. He had four sons, Fred, William, George and John and two daughters, May and Ella. Mr. Rowley was rural carrier for six years. Another rural carrier was John Reynolds. Before carrying mail he worked for the St. Charles Stave Mill. His one child living today is Mrs. Janette Buck of Saginaw. His wife was Jennie Alyward.

### BUSINESS PLACES DURING 1880-1900

The new hotels built during this period were the Heinemann and Conlan House. The Heinemann Hotel was owned by F. Heinemann's father, Herman, back in 1885. Mr. Heinemann is now president of the St. Charles Community Bank, succeeding Peter Hartley. His father also owned a sawmill.

The Peter Schweigers came to St. Charles in 1882, establishing a clothing and tailoring shop. His children were Louise, Anna Marie, Carl and Joseph. Anna Marie married Peter A. Hartley, whose family moved here in 1899. Joseph married Mable Sanderson, whose family were pioneers of Fergus. Louise Schweiger Clipper is now living in Mason.

Mr. Peter Hartley, although a late comer to St. Charles, was well known to many people throughout the state. Of his many activities those that we think of most frequently is his Ford Sales and Service, sawmills



and his retail lumber and building supplies business, now operated by William Gould. His connections with supplying timber to coal mines are well known. The great smokestack of old No. 8 is located now at the cottage on Clear Lake. Mr. & Mrs. Hartley will always be remembered for their generosity in the establishment of the Hartley Nature School Camp for the boys and girls of Saginaw County; also for the lovely town library, as well as many other good works known only to a few. He also served as bank president for many years.

Another familiar feed mill was that owned by Parmalee. It was here that Mr. Collins started working when he came to town. Ted Mertz kept books. Mr. Collins operated the feed mill after the death of Mr. Parmalee.

There are many personalities that we would like to tell about that came here during this period but time and space prevents us from telling all. It is hoped, by this writer, that all of you will read Andrew Minto's poem, "What Changes Have Been Wrought Since '85". This will recall to many places and names that we should not forget. One that we should mention is the millinery shop that was operated by Miss Bernier. It was located where Hulien's Drugstore now stands. After she retired in 1912, our very capable and nice Miss O'Mara continued her business. Miss O'Mara's shop has continued during these years and we are very proud of her and her well-kept shop.

Another was the store kept by Nichols and Rogers. Both of these families have been active participants in civic affairs. Many have enjoyed the lovely Lyndale Gardens of Mrs. Bertha Rogers.

Mrs. Alice Thompson, one of the centennial queens, was 91 years old on January 16, 1960. She was born in New York State in the town of South Hollow in the year 1869. Her parents were Henry and Chloe Wilson. She had a sister, Lannie Wilson Alyward, and a brother, William Fenton Wilson. She came to St. Charles with her family in 1885. In 1886 she married William Burton Thompson. They have six children: Sylva, Clemmie, Mahala, George, Ora and William.

Mrs. Thompson now lives in the home her father-in-law, Burton Thompson, built when he came to St. Charles in 1880. Her sister-in-law, Edith Wilson, resides with her.

Andrew M. Armstrong came to St. Charles in 1898 to establish a shoe store. He and his wife, Elizabeth, founded their first store in the building now occupied by Gould's variety store. A few years later Mr. Armstrong built the store which is now operated by his daughter, Theressa. Miss Armstrong has two sisters, Belle in Texas and Georgiann in New York.

Mrs. Arthur Sunday's family dates back four generations. The Manchester family came to St. Charles in the 1870's to work in the lumber mills. Jay Manchester was Mrs. Sunday's father. For a number of years his mother lived in the Earl Clark home.





## CHANGES IN THE SCHOOLS

The old North St. Charles District #1 school was still operating. Mr. E. A. Stimson served as director until the school was closed in 1882. Although the new school was not completely finished in 1883, it was first used then. Ira Frees and Benjamin Saniford were the first directors of the new school. The new school is dated from 1884. It could seat three hundred children, and its assessed value at that time was \$7,000.00. The bonded debt was \$4,000.00 and the total indebtedness was \$5,600.00. Figures have changed since then for new school buildings!

The first commencement exercises held in District #1 was in June 1901. There was one senior graduating. Her name was Harriet Pengilly. Dr. Griffin, member of the board, presented her with the diploma. The faculty at that time consisted of: John C. Nafe, superintendent, Jennie Nicholson, principal, Jennie L. Emerson, Myrtle Brooker, Nina Gollwitzer, Mable Roberts and Edith L. Nafe.

## COAL IS DISCOVERED

During the late 1880's the lumber industry steadily declined. The last two steamers to haul lumber from St. Charles were the Nickel and Saidee. So it was with great excitement, as well as with thanksgiving, that the news of the finding of coal came to St. Charles in 1890's in the person of Alonzo Adams, a well driller. One of the first large mining companies was that of the Somers Coal Company of Cleveland, at one time operating eight or ten mines. Williams, Rowley and Elmer Millard were the earliest mine test drillers. Mrs. Vera Gollwitzer Rice was chief bookkeeper for the Somers Coal Company. After fifteen years they sold their interests to Robert Gage Coal Company. Perhaps many remember their president and organizer, Mr. Charles Coryell. Mr. Coryell organized this company in 1900. They had four mines which produced three thousand tons per day.

Mr. William Powell, whose family moved to St. Charles from Ohio in 1898 to work in the mines, recalls many of the coal mines for us. Old No. 1 across from the depot; No. 2 where Richmond Lumber Company operates; No. 3 on the right side of the road across from Bill Schroeder's farm; new No. 2 back one or two miles from the depot; Willes Creek mine on Red Row; new No. 3 on the same street; No. 8 located on the Hartley Nature Camp grounds; No. 9 two miles north and a half mile east of M-47. There were three cooperative mines sunk much later. They were the St. Charles-Chesaning, the Aurora mine and the Garfield mine.

There were salt wells located in two mines, No. 1 and No. 2. Bromide was made and shipped in glass jars by rail. The salt was packed in barrels and shipped in the same manner to chemical plants. We bring to a close this brief history of St. Charles from the years 1848 to 1900.

Our history of St. Charles would not be complete without the township history. Therefore, we are presenting it by school districts.





### DISTRICT NO. 3 OF ST. CHARLES TOWNSHIP

The earliest record that can be found is the property of George and Amanda Spencer. It was a deed for eighty acres given to them by Mrs. Spencer's parents, Harvey and Deborah Adams, in 1857, for \$25.00. Mr. Spencer's two brothers, Alfred and Charles, and his sister, Eunice Oyer, came in the late 1860's. There were seven Spencer children. Mrs. Myrtle Walworth of Chesaning is the granddaughter. Mrs. Walworth's mother, Emma Burrows Spencer, was one of the first log cabin teachers in Spencerville, now called Fergus. One of Mrs. Walworth's greatest pleasures in her youth was for her father to take her over the corduroy roads to Indiantown. There they would see the many wigwams of the Indians. She was fascinated by the colorful shawls of the Indian mothers, as well as the Papooses being carried on their backs.

Mrs. Maude Miller's parents, the Oyers, lived on the farm now owned by Roy and Florence Robins.

The next family to arrive in Fergus was that of the William Sandersons in 1859. "Man" Sanderson, who still owned the old homestead, was awarded the Centennial Farm plaque in the Fall of 1859. Frank Sanderson built many bridges in and around St. Charles. Asa Sanderson owned a hardware store in St. Charles, as well as being president of the St. Charles bank. Fred and Anna Sanderson stayed on the old homestead, although Anna did teach at the Fergus school back in 1875. Harry Sanderson, another son, lived in Fergus as a farmer during his lifetime.

William Boist came to Fergus in the year of 1860. His descendants will have a centennial farm this year, as a part of the original farm still belongs to Mrs. Fannie Boist Craig and her daughters: Mrs. Florence Robins, Mrs. Beulah Webber, Mrs. Ellen Blunt and Mrs. Evelyn Mills.

In the early 1860's the family of Benjamin and Sarah Beedle Price came from New York State. They had three daughters: Clara, Louise and Emma. Clara later married Benjamin Gage in 1870. They had five children: Carl, Clarence, Arthur, Laura and Fannie. Arthur and Fannie are still living. Louise married Hiram Lytle, son of Freeman Lytle, one of St. Charles' earliest settlers. Emma married Frank Lytle, Hiram's brother.

The parents of Guy and Harry Chilton came in 1881. Mr. Chilton was an auctioneer, as well as a farmer.

The earliest school records date back to 1860 when school was held in a log cabin. The log school was used until 1872, and was then replaced by a frame school. Early directors of the school were: Austin Smith, Alfred Spencer, George Spencer, J. T. Thompson, Benjamin Gage and A. T. Sanderson. Other early teachers were: Mildred Southwell Gage, W. C. Mathewson, Edith Walker Shovan and Nellie Downing Reynolds.

The railroad company established a stop at Pine Grove, South of Fergus. Then around 1883 the post office, as well as the railroad stop, was changed to Fergus. John Spencer, who owned the general store, was then appointed postmaster. Later, Sim Boist, son of William Boist, had the post office next to his home. The home is now owned by Henry



and Laura Smith. Mr. Pratt served after him and then Fred Dodge purchased the store. The last owner was Thomas Giblin.

#### SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5

Early residents here were the F. B. Bentley family, John Pitt, J. Mullen and McCrory. A great many Indians inhabited this area. Among the Indians whose families owned land here and now live in St. Charles are the Fishers and Stevens. Mr. Fisher recalls his father going to the log school in Indiantown. In fact, most of the children were Indians. Mr. Fisher's Indian name is Mis-Wa-Cha. His father, James, was Show-Ne-Geek.

Walter Berridge is now the oldest person, ninety-three years of age, living in this community. He came with his mother and sister from London, England in 1883. He came to Indiantown because his Aunt Elizabeth Bentley lived there. His wife, Sarah, was a niece of Mrs. McNeill, an old resident of District No. 7. Mr. Berridge lives with his sons, Arthur and James, on the old homestead.

Indiantown has had four school buildings. The first frame school burned during a school performance when kerosene was spilled on the floor. The second building burned January 17, 1923 after school hours. At one time, the school district of Indiantown included a part of Dutchtown. It was later divided to form two districts and part of the Indiantown and Dutchtown districts formed the Forest Lawn district. Directors of the early Indiantown school starting in 1859 were: R. W. Beeman, Lyman Stevens (5 years), Benjamin Morse, Peter David, Joel Bromfield, Charles Harrison, John Mullen, Thomas Larnier and Daniel Griggs. The Indians had a church on the Leo Flory farm for many years. By 1881 there were only seventy-seven Indians left in Indiantown.

#### SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7

The first school records that we have for this district were in 1875, when the school district was organized. Nettie Schuman of Brant Township attended this early school. She says it was called the "Green Meadow" school, and her aunt, Amy Spencer, taught the first year it was organized. Mrs. Schuman is the granddaughter of George Spencer. In her early years there she remembers seeing many Indian wigwams in the neighborhood. She lived near the present home of the Hall family. The first directors were: J. Stevens, Daniel Mahoney and E. H. Jones. The first school was built in 1877.

Some of the early residents of this district dates back to the 1860's. They were: Mrs. C. S. Davis, C. G. Barker, Daniel Mahoney, Orville Stevens, C. Shepan, Andrew Kanzig, E. H. Jones and Mrs. H. Parks.

Mrs. Hall says her grandfather, John Davis, came in 1864. She tells of him popping corn, without a popper, on the hot coals in the fireplace. It popped all over, but it was still good.





The Henry Klump farm was another large farm divided into several smaller ones. Some old settlers living here were: Calvin Barker, Alonzo Adams (discoverer of coal in St. Charles), Cynthia Wallace and Daniel Mahoney.

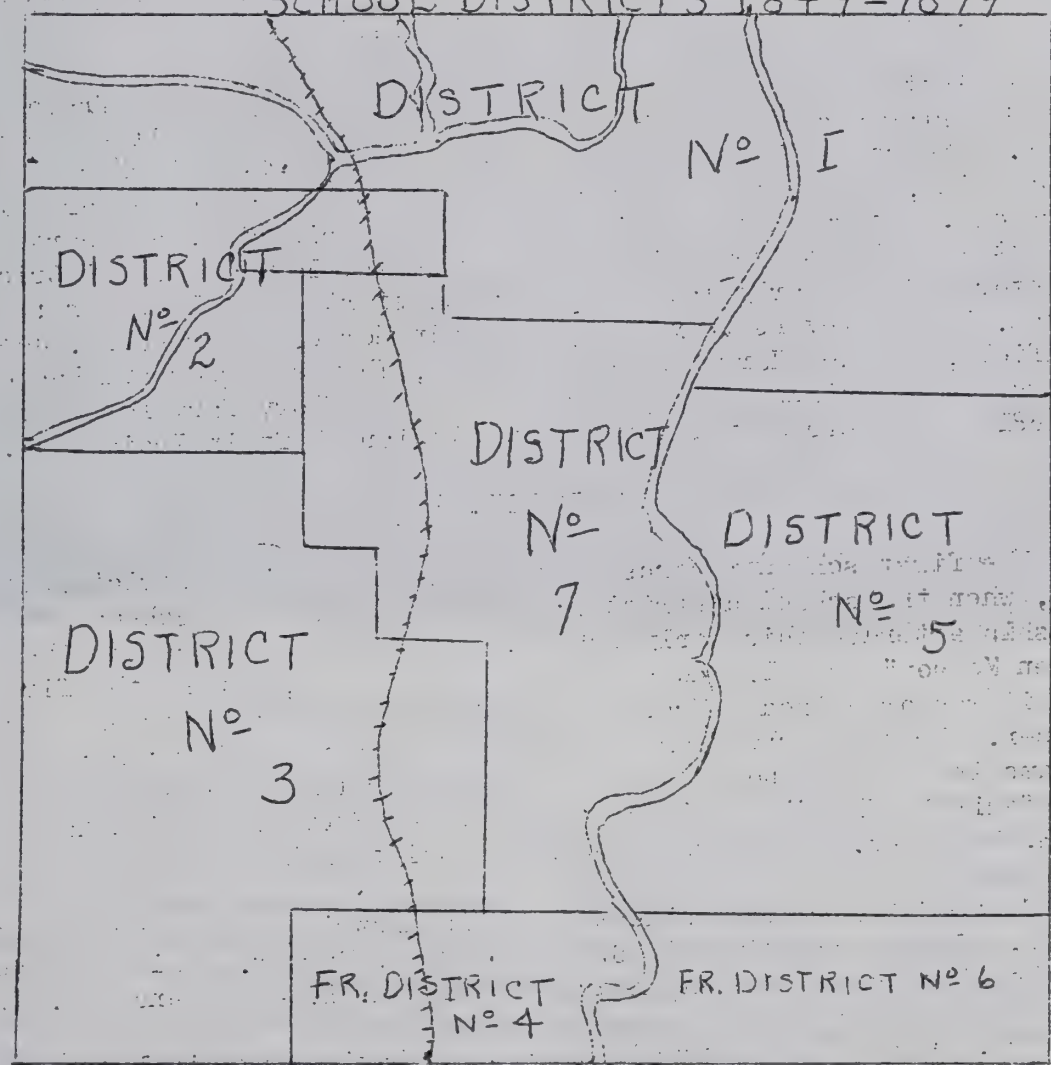
Early residents from the land owned by Steve Carlevatta are James Davis and Carl Shepan.

### SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 8

This school district was one of the last school districts formed. Records were not available until 1895. School officers were Patrick Mahoney, Eugene Friendscho and George Harris. The early teachers were Katherine Mahoney and Minnie Welsh.

This ends a brief history of our township's early settlers. We hope you have enjoyed it.

### SCHOOL DISTRICTS 1849-1879



This booklet was written and printed June, 1960.





### FERGUS SCHOOL IN THE EARLY 1900's

Horse and buggy, Marion Richmond, Mrs. Richmond, Mrs. Mathewson, Ernest Carr, Marion Richmond Jr., Clarence Gage, Lillian Prior, Nellie Spencer Lizzie Budzier Brockman, Florence Graves, Walter Sanderson, Lucy Mead Thiele, Myrtle Spencer Walworth, Della Montgomery Bennett, unknown, Clare Spencer, William Prior, Cyril Chilton, Ray Mead. Second row: L to R: Leslie Sanderson, Cordia Spencer Alkard, Mabel Adams Schweizer, Anna Budzier, Mabel Sanderson Valentine, Lulu Trumble Iles, unknown, Harry Chilton, Harry Mead, Elmer Chilton, Lorin Richmond. Third Row: L to R: Blanch Boist, unknown, Venice Spencer, Florence Boist, Beulah Boist, Hazel Boist, Mary Chilton Jones, Cynthia Carr, Claud Adams, Orin Richmond, Leslie Chilton, Leland Prior, Guy and Francis Chilton. Lady with bicycle, Laura Gage. Teacher, Millie Southwell Gage.















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